

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
IO-13 SSM-03 /075 W
-----036805 170300Z /20

R 160519Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6887
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USLO RIYADH

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN, SY, US
SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA BLASTS US

1. A MAJOR CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY IN THE SYRIAN PRESS VILIFYING THE US "CONSPIRACY" TO COVER-UP A BILATERAL EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, FIVE EDITORIALS DEALT WITH THIS SUBJECT IN THE THREE SYRIAN NEWSPAPERS AND ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, SIX MORE EDITORIALS REITERATED THE SAME THEME. AL-BAATH USES DAVAR REPORT ABOUT AMERICAN SATELLITES DETECTING NEW SETTLEMENTS AND THE "US SILENCE ABOUT THESE SETTLEMENT" AS PROOF OF "AMERICAN-ISRAELI COLLUSION WITH SADG TO DECEIVE WORLD OPINION." BAATH GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE "MUD SLINGING GOING ON BETWEEN AMERICA AND ISRAEL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS DESIGNED TO COVER UP THE CONSPIRATORIAL SCHEMES AGAINST THE ARAB AND AFRICAN REGIONS AND TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE RETURN OF KISSINGER-STYLE SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY AIMED AT SECURING FURTHER EGYPTIAN CONCESSIONS AND REGFONIZING ISRAEL'S EXPANSIONIST POLICY."

2. IN ANOTHER EDITORIAL BAATH SAYS THE THIRD STAGE OF

EGYPTIAN DIPLOMACY, ATHERTON'S SHUTTLE, "WILL BE CONFINED TO STERILE AND INFINITE DISCUSSIONS OR TO ADOPTING STEPS FOR A SEPARATE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND AND ISRAEL, DICTATED BY TEL AVIV."

3. YET ANOTHER BAATHI WRITER THINKS THAT AMERICA WANTS A STRONG ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SHARM AL-SHEIKH TO SPARE ITSELF THE TASK OF INVADING THE OIL STATES AND OCCUPYING THEM.

4. WITH LEBANON IN MIND, THAWRA CLAIMS THAT SADAT'S NEXT STEP WILL BE TO CAUSE REBELLION THROUGHOUT THE ARAB WORLD TO UPSET THE STEADFASTNESS FRONT.

5. THE MANDATORY EDITORIAL ON US UNWILLINGNESS TO PRESSURE ISRAEL IS PROVIDED BY TISHRIIN WHICH CLAIMS THAT EITHER SADAT IS MYOPIC OR IS ENGAGED IN A COVER-UP FOR THE DEAL BEING CONCLUDED BY WASHINGTON, TEL AVIV, AND CAIRO. THIS, ACCORDING TO TISHRIIN, IS THE MORE PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION.

6. IN SHORT, SYRIAN MEDIA HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO FAN THE FIRES OF THE AMERICAN CONSPIRACY THEORY OF HISTORY. PERHAPS THE PRESS IS CATCHING UP FOR LOST TIME WHEN ITS EDITORIALS WERE DOMINATED BY PAEANS OF PRAISE FOR ASSAD. THE ANTI-AMERICAN TONE PROVIDES CONVENIENT BACKGROUND FOR PREPARATIONS NOW UNDERWAY FOR ASSAD'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION. NEVERTHELESS, AS ONE SYRIA OFFICIAL PUT IT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT IS PROBABLY NOT WORTH GETTING EXCITED ABOUT THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SYRIA'S MEDIA DIATRIBES.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DAMASC00927
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780072-1066
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780248/aaaaboue.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8a33dbd5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3576744
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN MEDIA BLASTS US
TAGS: SOPN, PDEV, SY, US, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8a33dbd5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014